

(received via e-mail)

From: Arthur Kennedy
To: <smcconnell@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: 3/2/2009 8:11 PM
Subject: Support for the Rubicon Trail Cleanup and Abatement Order

I support the draft Cleanup and Abatement Order issued on January 23, 2009 by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board to the El Dorado County Department of Transportation. I am concerned about the destructive and unchecked off-road vehicle use resulting in ongoing resource damage on the Rubicon Trail. The Board must act to stop increased erosion, soil compaction, and damage to plants and animals. I support the Regional Board's effort to prevent this situation from worsening even further and believe that such actions are long overdue.

If adopted, the order would be a positive first step in addressing the off-roaders who refuse to stay on the trail and the failure of the Forest Service to implement and enforce strong regulations.

I support the adoption of the Order and ask that its adoption be complemented by closure of the Rubicon Trail to all wet season use. Wet season use of these fragile areas is particularly damaging. These important interim measures will have immediate and noticeable benefits to the ecosystem and the water quality.

Off-road groups argue that they can police themselves and that a formal order is unnecessary because the environmental impacts of off-road vehicles can be mitigated by volunteer efforts. Efforts by volunteers to pick up their own trash are well-intentioned; however, these efforts cannot solve the problems caused by inappropriate use. Furthermore, self-policing and volunteer efforts have proven largely ineffective in preventing environmental damage and illegal behavior.

I commend the Regional Board and staff for your excellent assessment of the impacts on the Rubicon from off-road vehicle use and initiating the process needed to stop this damage from continuing. I also applaud you for finally taking action -- action that is long overdue -- and ask that the draft Cleanup and Abatement Order be formally adopted.

Arthur Kennedy